

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SY-05 (ISO) W

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R 282230Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7381

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PE

SUBJECT: STUDENT PROTESTS SUBSIDE

REF: LIMA 8876, LIMA 8859, LIMA 8873

SUMMARY: POLICE FINALLY REMOVED BARRICADES ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, FROM STREETS AROUND HIGH SCHOOL WHERE STUDENT TROUBLES BEGAN OCTOBER 22. STUDENTS ON OCTOBER 26 ANNOUNCED A QUALIFIED CONCESSION TO GOP. ALTHOUGH THER HAVE BEEN NO STREET ACTIONS SINCE OCTOBER 25, WITH EXCEPTION OF ONE INCIDENT DOWNTOWN EVENING OCTOBER 27, LIMA PRESS HAS CONTINUED FAIRLY INTENSIVE CAMPAIGN OF RIDICULE AND DENUNCIATION AGAINST STUDENT PORTESTS, THEREBY SIGNALLING GOP SENSITIVITY TO THIS RECENT PHENOMENON. END SUMMARY.

1. STREET DOMONSTRATIONS WHICH HAD BEEN WIDESPREAD IN LIMA OCTOBER 22-25 WOUND DOWN OCTOBER 25-26 (PRES REPORTS ONE STUDENT/POLICE CLASH DOWNTOWN OCTOBER 27). POLICE DID NOT REMOVE BARRICADES OF SCHOOL DESKS AND BENCHES FROM MAJOR AVENUE OUTSIDE SALT WAREHOUSE WHERE TROUBLE BEGAN UNTIL OCTOBER 27. SAME DAY STUDENTS OF SAN MARTIN DE PORRES HIGH SCHOOL, WHO HAVE BEEN HOLED UP INSIDE SCHOOL, ANNOUNCED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO LIFT THEIR BARRICADE CONDITIONAL UPON MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TAKING NO REPRISALS AND RELEASING ALL

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STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN DTAINED. STUDENTS ALSO ASKED

CEDING OF THE SALT WAREHOUSE TO THE SCHOOL (WHICH MINISTRY EDUCATION SAID HAD ALREADY BEEN DONE), AND RESUMPTION OF DIALOGUE IN WHICH PARENTS AND STUDENTS WILL HAVE ROLE. THE STUDENT COMMUNIQUE NAMED HIGH-LEVEL MINISTRY EDUCATION OFFICIAL AS A DECEIVER AND DENIED THAT TEACHERS' UNION, SUTEP, HAD ENGINEERED THE PROTEST.

2. INDICATIVE OF SLANTED REPORTING ON STUDENT ISSUE OVER PAST SIX DAYS, ONLY ONE LIMA DAILY PRINTED STUDENT COMMUNIQUE. INSTEAD, PRESS CONTINUED CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT PARTICIPANTS AND ORGANIZERS OF PROTEST ACTIONS. AMONG PRESS ITEMS WERE PHOTOS OF LARGE STUDENT GATHERINGS WITH A FEW YOUNG ADULTS PRESENT WHOSE HEADS WERE CIRCLED AND WHO WERE DESCRIBED AS AGITATORS. THERE WERE ALSO FRONTPAGE PHOTOS OF A SCHOOL GIRL WHO HAD BEEN DESCRIBED AS "MURDERED" IN STUDENT AND SUTEP HANDBILLS BUT WHO IS SAFELY IN POLICE CUSTODY. PRESS PRINTED PRO-GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS BY VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL GROUPS AND PUBLICIZED YOUTH OF LIMA DISTRICT OF BENA WHO ARE HELPING GOV REGULATE PRICES - A RECENT CAMPAIGN - BY CONDUCTING SPOT CHECKS OF STORES AND STREET VENDORS. THESE YOUTH WERE HIGHLIGHTED AS "RESPONSIBLE YOUTH OF THE COMMUNITY".

3. COMMENT: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION BADLY HANDLED LEGITIMATE STUDENT GRIEVANCES WHICH HAD LONG SIMMERED IN SEVERAL LIMA HIGH SCHOOLS, THUS SETTING UP GOVERNMENT OF MORALES BERMUDEZ FOR EMBARRASSING CONFRONTATION WITH STUDENTS. STUDENTS RALLIED UNDER NATIONALIST AND REVOLUTIONARY BANNERS WHICH GOV ITSELF UNFURLED; THEY ESCHEWED PARTISAN POLITICAL SYMBOLS. IT WAS MARK OF GREATER LIBERALISM OF MORALES BERMUDEZ ERA THAT STUDENTS WERE ALLOWED TO MARCH, BUT THE FACT THEY HAD TO BE DISPERSED BY FORCE IS A SIGN OF AMBIVALENCE AND RELATIVE INFLEXIBILITY OF MILITARY REGIME IN COPING WITH STUDENTS.
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